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Romania

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

New legislation impacts U.S. red meat exports 2005

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Report Highlights:

A new veterinary regulation approved by the Romanian Government and set to become effective on December 19, 2005, is expected to significantly reduce U.S. red meat exports to Romania. FAS Bucharest has been continuously working with the Ministry of Agriculture to amend the new regulation and delay its implementation until Romania will fully become a member of the European Union. Poultry meat exports are not affected by this regulation. Other new regulation describes procedures for heat-treatment processing applied to meat and meat products found positive with Salmonella bacteria.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Sofia [BU1]
[RO]

Romania Adopts EU legislation that Limits Red Meat Exports

Romanian Veterinary and Food-Safety Authority recently approved a regulation that will have a major impact on red meat exports to Romania. Veterinary Order no. 53/2005 transposes the EU 79/542/CEE and 2005/234/CEE, which regulates animal health and veterinary certification requirements for non-EU members.

The regulation will limit U.S. exports to Romania, since through this law, *only EU approved red meat processing plants would be eligible to export*. The regulation covers live cattle, live swine, live ovine and caprine, and meat originating from those species (including horse meat) but does not cover live poultry and poultry meat.

New Health Certificates for Red Meat Imports in Romania

Currently, exports of pork meat and beef products are accompanied by USDA health certificates, which have been bilaterally negotiated with the Romanian Veterinary authorities. The provisions of the new certificates, which will be required after December 19, 2005, will prevent many U.S. meat plants from exporting to Romania.

According to the regulation, imports of fresh meat originating from swine, bovine, ovine, caprine and ecvidee, are accepted assuming they originate from approved countries or regions (United States is included in this list), and are accompanied by the proper Health Certificate and fulfill with the supplementary requirements (if required).

The regulation will have an impact on U.S. red meat exports, since only a few U.S. processing plants are EU approved. U.S. swine meat exports have had a significant growth this year, being expected to reach a value of \$50 million by the end of 2005 (25,000 MT) from \$15 million in 2004 (7,000 MT). Beef products (especially beef tripe) exports reached last year a value of \$2-3 million and were expected to reach about \$3.5 million by the end of 2005. No imports of ovine or caprine meat occurred, as there was no bilateral veterinary agreement reached by the two veterinary authorities. About a third of Romania's swine meat imports and two-thirds of its beef imports originate from countries outside European Union.

Given the very significant impact that such a regulation will have on U.S. exports, FAS Bucharest has been continuously working with the Ministry of Agriculture to amend the above regulation and delay the implementation until Romania will fully become an EU member.

Other Regulation: Heat-Treatment Accepted for Meat Shipments

Until spring this year, meat and meat products found Salmonella positive would have been subject to destruction (regardless Salmonella type). The new legislation makes distinction among various types of Salmonella and provides further instructions for meat-processing.

In case of red meat, meat products and game meat in which Salmonella of Enteritidis and/or Typhimurium types were detected, are confiscated and destroyed. In the case other types of Salmonella are detected, red meat or game meat products will be considered fit for consumption after the products go through a high temperature treatment, under sanitary-veterinary control and only after each batch was confirmed to be microbiologically safe.

Concerning poultry meat, similar instructions have been laid down. In all cases, when S.Enteritidis and/or S.typhimurium Salmonella type were found, the poultry meat products will be confiscated and destroyed. If other Salmonella types, such as S. galinarium, S.

pullorum, S. infantis, S. Berta, S. Thompson or other is found, the following procedure is to be followed:

- a) the meat products and ready-to-cook poultry meat products that cannot go through another high temperature treatment will be confiscated and destroyed;
- b) the poultry meat products that can go through another high temperature treatment, will be heat-treated under sanitary-veterinary control and each batch will be proposed for a microbiological control, that would confirm if the products are microbiologically safe;

Mechanically deboned poultry meat infested with Salmonella enteritidis and/or S.typhimurium will be confiscated and destroyed. Mechanically deboned poultry meat batches detected with Salmonella gallinarum, S.pullorum, S.infantis, S.Berta, S.Thompson and other serotypes are processed into heat-treated meat products in establishments which have adequate technical equipment that allows recording of temperature level and heat-treatment process duration. Each batch is then submitted for a microbiological testing.

New Health Certificates for Live Animal Imports in Romania

The new regulation will have a minimal commercial impact on live animals exports from United States as they had been banned as result of previously approved veterinary legislation. According to the new regulation Order 53/2005 published by the National Sanitary-Veterinary Authority and Food Safety, live animal imports (except ecvidee) are accepted for import assuming they originate from countries or parts of countries included in the list below. In addition, the live animals subject to importation should be accompanied by the corresponding Health Certificate and should comply with the supplementary requirements (if required) as well as the transportation conditions.

List of third countries which are allowed to export live animals to Romania includes Bulgaria, Canada, Switzerland, Chile, Greenland, Croatia, Island, New Zealand, St. Peter and Miquelon, Romania.